

[FCC Fines TV Station \\$10,000 for Requiring Appointment to View Public Inspection File](#)

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The FCC released a [Notice of Apparent Liability for Forfeiture](#) today, proposing a **\$10,000 fine** against a **public TV station** in Los Angeles for requiring an appointment to view the station's public inspection file. This case shows how seriously the FCC takes the requirement of open and unfettered access to a **broadcast station's public file**. An FCC agent visited the station's main studio twice without identifying himself as an FCC employee. Both times, the station's security guard refused to let him see the station's public inspection file or speak with the station manager without an appointment.

On the third visit, the FCC agent identified himself as such and was allowed to view the station's public inspection file "after a thorough examination of the agent's badge and several phone calls to [station] personnel."

The public inspection file was found to be complete. However, the station was fined \$10,000 for "willfully and repeatedly" failing to make the public inspection file available. The FCC stressed that "**stations cannot require members of the public to make appointments to access a station's public inspection file.**"

Note that the FCC had no issues with the contents or completeness of the public inspection file. The only issue was **access** to the public file. Although the station may appeal this fine, this should be a lesson to all stations to make the public inspection file to all members of the public during regular business hours....no appointments required.

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